



The Blurb

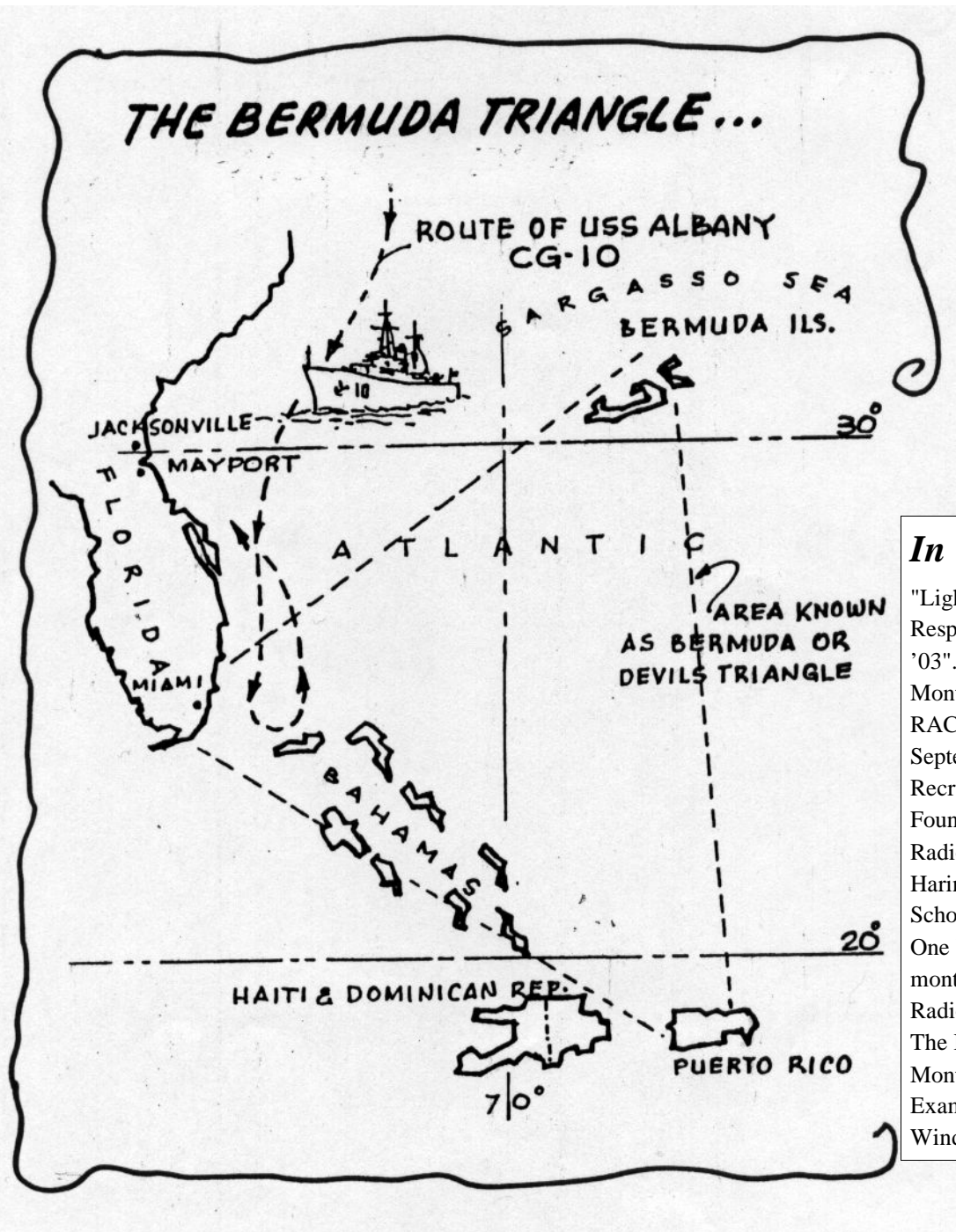


Newsletter of The Phil-Mont Mobile Radio Club
Public Service Since 1949

Volume 53 Number 9

<http://www.phil-mont.org>

September 2003



In This Issue

"Lights OUT!" —Amateurs Respond to "Blackout of '03".....3

Montgomery County RACES / ARES Launches September Volunteer Recruitment Drive.....5

Foundation for Amateur Radio announces award of Haring Memorial Scholarship to W3XYZ.....5

One Up, One Down? Busy month in space for Amateur Radio.....6

The Bermuda Triangle7

Monthly Phil-Mont VE Exam Sessions.....7

Windows Tips from Ted...8

The Blurb is published monthly by, and for, the members of **The PHIL-MONT MOBILE RADIO CLUB, INC.** whose purpose is to promote Amateur Radio in general, and Mobile Radio in particular. *Copying and quoting* is permitted with a credit line. We gladly exchange publications with other amateur radio clubs. Requests should be sent to the Editor. *Subscriptions* are available to non-members for \$10, addressed to the Treasurer.

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Submissions deadline: all copy must be in the hands of the Editors by the 20th of the previous month.

Sunday Morning Net Schedules

- **2 Meter/ 70cm Net**.....at 09:30et on W3QV repeater
- **10-on-10 Net**at 10:00et 28.393 MHz USB (\pm QRM)
- **75 meter Net**at 10:20et 3.993 MHz LSB

License Examinations

are held on the **first non-holiday Thursday** each month (except July and August) at **Northeast High School,**

Cottman and Algon Streets, Philadelphia PA

Registration begins at 6:00 P.M. Enter through the SPARC wing. Exams begin and doors closed and locked at **6:30 P.M.**

Sharp! Applicants should call Dusty ND3Q at 215-879-0505 (day) or 215 482 0386 (eve) for the latest information.

Contact Phil-mont:

P.O. Box 88

Abington, PA 19001

<http://www.phil-mont.org>

webmistress Maggie K3XS k3xs@arrl.net

For club information: contact any club officer, or the repeaters listed below. Address or club directory changes, and articles that are for the membership e-mail list should be sent to:
wb3koj@comcat.com

The club meets at 7:30 PM on the **second non-holiday Wednesday** of every month except July and August at **The Masonic Home**
801 Ridge Pike
Lafayette Hill, PA
19444-1799

All visitors are welcome!

Club Stations

W3QV Club Repeater – Trustee: W3BBB

Ridge & Port Royal Avenues, Philadelphia, PA

147.03 MHz + PL 91.5 Hz 444.80 MHz + PL 186.2 Hz

W3AA at Northeast High School –Trustee: WU3I

Cottman and Algon Streets, Philadelphia, PA

W3EM – Field Day and special event station

Trustee: W3VVS

President:KB3IV

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Wyncote PA

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mtarab01@villanova.edu

Directors: WU3I (04), W3BBB(03), N3MT (03), K3CJ (04), W3AOK(03), K3XS(04), N3XKE (A)

Committees

Archives: NG3P

Audit: NS3K

Awards: open

Blurb folding:

WB3KOJ & WB3KOH

Directory:WB3KOJ

DX: N3MT

Emerg.Coar.: N3XKE

Field Day: open

Internet: K3XS

Membership: W3LEN

Net Control: KB3IV

Publicity: W3RM

Program: Club VP

Public Service: open

Refreshments: W3AOK

Repeater: W3BBB

Skywarn: WX3PHI

Sunshine: N3GLU

Youth: N3MT

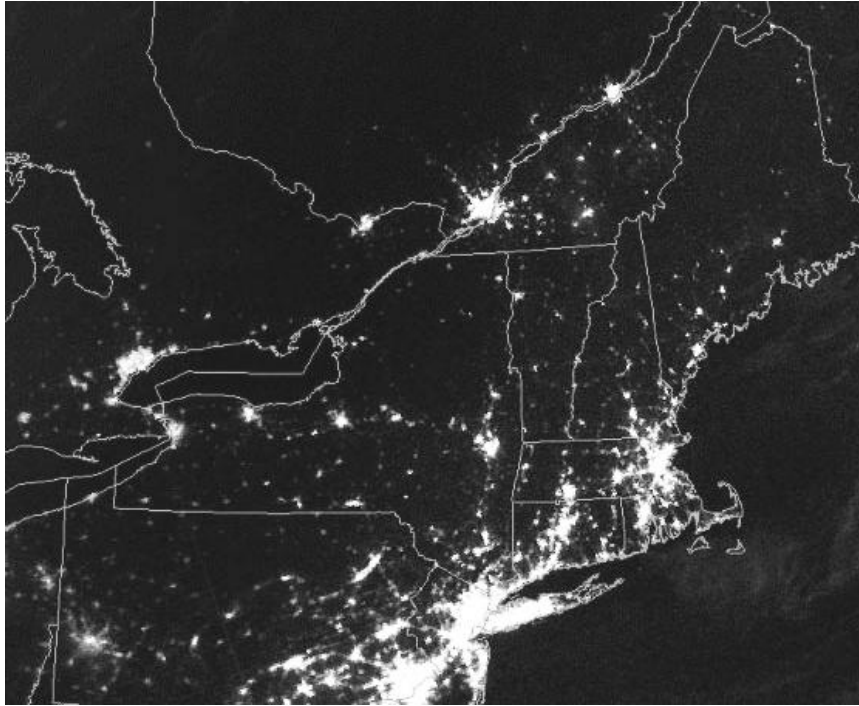
TVI: W3VVS

VE Program: ND3Q

W3AA Trustee: WU3I

Welcome: K3CJ.

"Lights OUT!" --Amateurs Respond to "Blackout of '03"



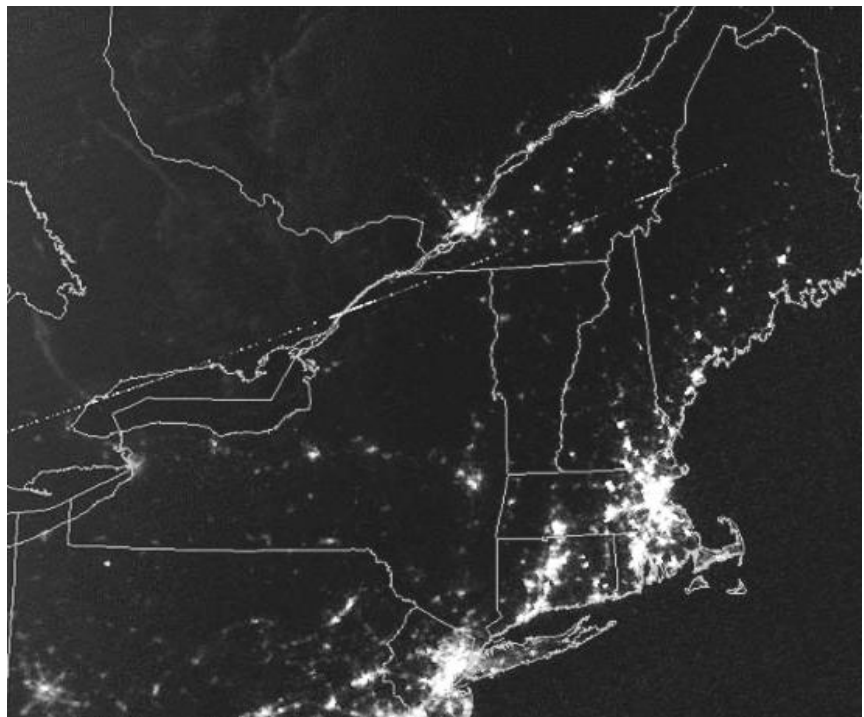
down, but several others remained on the air with emergency power.

"It was a good drill," said New York City–Long Island Section Emergency Coordinator Tom Carrubba, KA2D. "The lesson is that everybody gets a little complacent. Have emergency power backup and make sure it's working!" An area with a population of nearly 10 million was served by 100 ham radio operators. Some volunteers headed to critical emergency services locations: Red Cross sites, fire departments, or hospitals. One hospital was temporarily out of power and ARRL volunteers provided communications to ambulances until electricity was restored. Carrubba estimated that operators handled 800 to 1,000 communications from Thursday afternoon until early Friday.

When a widespread, prolonged electrical power outage August 14 took out power in many states in the Northeastern US, Amateur Radio operators once again were ready and able to provide emergency communications.

held just two months before. Some repeaters in the New York City area—including the primary 147.000 "TAC 2" machine—were

In New York City, many were stranded in trains or elevators, or behind gridlocked motor traffic, while thousands of others were marooned in airports largely unable to serve arriving or departing aircraft. Cellular telephone systems were overloaded or completely out of service, and Amateur Radio once again demonstrated its ability to deliver "When All Else Fails", the slogan of the ARRL Field Day



ARES New York City–Long Island District Emergency Coordinator Charles Hargrove, N2NOV, remained at the city's Red Cross Headquarters in Manhattan. ARES teams provided communication for the Red Cross Emergency Response Vehicles (ERVs) set up at main transportation centers in Manhattan—Grand Central Station, Penn Station and at the Port Authority Terminal. ARES members also accompanied ERVs called into action to follow New York Fire Department personnel on more than two dozen fire calls.

When power went down in her community, Diane Ortiz, K2DO, the Public Information Coordinator for NYC–Long Island started up an informal net on the Long Island Mobile Amateur Radio Club's 146.85 repeater. Over the next 20 hours or so, the net passed approximately 500 pieces of "health-and-welfare traffic," helping people stuck in the city to contact family members. In addition to handling messages, amateurs also relayed useful information, such as which stores or filling stations were open. With many radio and TV stations off the air, hams were able to spread the word.

RACES organizations activated in most Greater New York City area counties after a state of emergency was declared. Some ARES teams—including a few across the Hudson River in New Jersey—activated or remained on standby to help if called upon. In New Jersey, a net set up on a back-up repeater established communication with the Red Cross lead chapter's N2ARC in Princeton—staffed by members of Mercer County ARES/RACES—and other New Jersey ARC

chapters.

NNJ SEC Steve Ostrove, K2SO spent about four hours at the EOC in Elizabeth after the blackout began. "The Elizabeth Police were impressed with the information I was able to provide," he said. The net stood down at about 10 PM after telephone communication among the Red Cross chapters had been reestablished and power began to be restored.

In upstate New York, Fred Stevens, K2FRD, says the situation reminded him of the 1964 power blackout in the eastern US. "This is an emergency communicator's wildest fantasy: a major power outage in which we can demonstrate our preparedness," he said.

Ken Davis, KB2KFV, who's president of the Rensselaer, New York, County ARES/RACES Club commented online: "It seems that the amateurs were better prepared than the government sector," he said. "Amateurs in this area were up and on the air before there was any response from local government."

Michigan Section Manager Dale Williams, WA8EFK, reported ARES activations in his state. Some ARES teams in Michigan were providing assistance to emergency operations centers and to the Red Cross, because the relief agency's telephone system relies on commercial power. Nets were brought up on both HF and VHF frequencies.

In Ohio, Section Emergency Coordinator Larry Rain, WD8IHP, reports that all ARES organizations in northern Ohio were activated after the power grid went down. Still going strong are ARES teams

in Cleveland and Akron—both still without power. "ARES is handling communication support for Ohio Emergency Management in the affected cities and communities," Rain said. Power has been restored in Toledo, however.

Rain reports a power surge that occurred when the electricity came back on disrupted the Richland County Hospital's telephone system. "Amateur Radio was there to provide back-up communication until 4:30 this morning," he said on Friday. Ohio VHF and UHF nets and the Ohio SSB net on HF have been handling blackout-related traffic.

The East Coast Amateur Radio Service, known to most as ECARS, operated for extended periods on 7.255 MHz SSB providing wide-area non-emergency communications focusing on assistance to mobile HF operators in the affected area outside the formal ARES/RACES nets. Telephone health-and-welfare messages could be relayed by telephone though fixed-station amateurs who were still on the air, and the status of electrical power in areas all over the East Coast could be rapidly ascertained.

Information from ARRL

Montgomery County RACES / ARES Launches September Volunteer Recruitment Drive

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PA — AUGUST 1, 2003 — Robert Lees, Amateur Radio Operator W3ZQN, announced today that Montgomery County (Pennsylvania) Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services (RACES) / Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES) will be launch a volunteer recruitment drive for the month of September.

In an interview, Lees stated that Montgomery County RACES / ARES will be participating in the Limerick Generating Station's bi-annual emergency drill scheduled for this November. Montgomery County RACES / ARES is an integral component of the Limerick Generating Station Emergency Plan that includes a multitude of agencies and services, including the American Red Cross, county fire services, police departments and local municipalities.

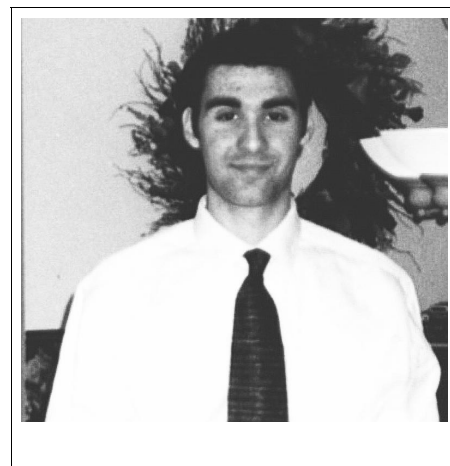
Mr. Lees, Radio Officer for Montgomery County RACES / ARES, explained that it has been his experience that when planning begins for a big event, such as a Limerick Generating Station Drill, new volunteers come forward and express interest in becoming involved. "This year will be somewhat different" said Lees. "Since our past Limerick Drill,

working with Montgomery County Emergency Services, we have instituted a new enrollment process to comply with the County security procedures. This process will take between four and eight weeks from indication of interest to issuance of a RACES / ARES identification card." Lees explained that a RACES / ARES ID card is required for access to certain locations that are secured in the event of a major event, such as triage sites, local municipal emergency operations centers, Red Cross shelters, etc.

Licensed Amateur Radio Operators interested in more information about Montgomery County RACES / ARES may contact Montgomery County RACES / ARES by forwarding an e-mail to WQ3Z@arrl.net or calling (215) 870-4017.

Foundation for Amateur Radio announces award of Haring Memorial Scholarship to W3XYZ

On July 4, the Foundation for Amateur Radio, who administers the Phil-Mont Mobile Radio Club's Haring Memorial Scholarship, announced the award of the 2003 Haring Scholarship to Eric D. Marano, W3XYZ of Harleysville PA. He was selected from among the seven eligible applicants for the award.



Eric was born in Montgomery County, PA in December of 1981, and currently resides with his parents in Harleysville, PA. He attended grade school at Corpus Christi Parish, and went to high school at Lansdale Catholic. Eric is presently pursuing a bachelor's degree in Computer Information Sciences in his senior year at Gwynedd Mercy College. After graduation, he would like to attain a position in Systems Analysis. His amateur radio activities include a lot of 40 meter CW and rag-chewing in SSB on the upper portion of this band. He also operates SSB on 10 meters in search of band openings for DX and talking on 2 meter repeaters daily. He is also exploring the SSTV and PSK, modes, and is studying for his Extra Class license upgrade.

DVRA/NJARC Hamfest

Delaware Valley Radio Association
/ NJ Antique Radio Club

Sunday, September 14, 2003
National Guard Armory 151
Eggerts Crossing Road,
Lawrenceville, NJ

Talk-in on 146.67 PL 131.8 W2ZQ
Open to sellers at 6:00 AM, to the
public at 8:00 AM

- . Admissions \$6.00
- . Free Parking
- . Children under 12 years old free
- . Refreshments will be available
- . Amateur radio and computer equipment
- . ARRL
- . Tailgate Vendor \$10.00 (Includes 1 admission)
- . Indoor Vendor Wall (electricity) \$20.00 (Includes 1 admission)
- Indoor
- Vendors will need to supply their own table not to exceed 10 feet in length.
- . Extra Indoor Space \$10.00

One Up, One Down? Busy month in space for Amateur Radio

It's been a roller-coaster ride for amateur radio space operators this August. Our old reliable "easysat", UO-14, has begun behaving erratically, and may have breathed its last.

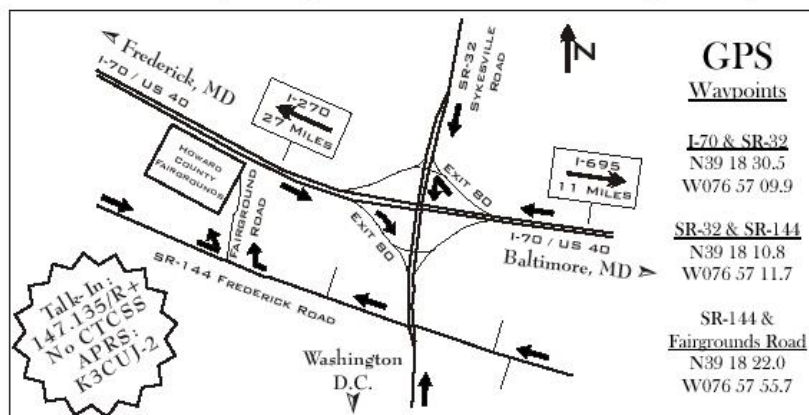
On August 5th, the satellite went silent until it was reset by ground

controller Chris Jackson G7UPN. Within a week it failed again, and has been silent since. Suspicion is falling on failure of the on-board batteries that store energy from the satellite's solar cells for use when it is in the Earth's shadow, or in "eclipse". Chris observes that the satellite has been operating for nearly fourteen years and calculates that the NiCd batteries have been through something like 74,000 charge/discharge cycles.

On the plus side of the ledger, on August 24th the packet station aboard the International Space Station returned to operation after a long hiatus. While the limited crew on board doesn't have much time for amateur radio operations beyond scheduled school contacts, having the packet station back in service makes it possible for us to continue to participate in the mission our own small way.

ARRL Maryland - DC Section Convention, Hamfest and Computer Show **Fall Fest 2003**

Saturday & Sunday, September 6th & 7th at the
Howard County Fairgrounds, West Friendship, Maryland



Gates open to the public, 8 am - 4 pm; Tailgaters, 6 am
Gen. Admission: \$6 for both days (\$5 before Sept. 1st)
Tailgating: \$10/space + general admission

40,000 sq. ft. of Indoor Vendor Space - Large Outdoor Tailgate Area
Free Amateur Exams AM Ham Station Skywarn Classes Forums

Vendors:

Indoors: 1-4 tables, \$35 ea. (\$30 before 5/1); 5+ tables, \$33 ea. (\$28 before 5/1)
Includes one general admission/table.
Barns: 1-4 spaces, \$15 ea. (\$14 before 5/1); 5+ spaces, \$14 ea. (\$13 before 5/1)
Tables are \$6 ea., or bring your own.
Vendors & Commercial Tailgaters can set-up Friday, September 5th, at noon.
Pick out your tables at www.Fall-Fest.com, or contact Ed Cacic by phone at 410-992-7197 or e-mail Ed at vendorsales@fall-fest.com.

Sponsors: Foundation for Amateur Radio and Columbia Amateur Radio Association
P. O. Box 911, Columbia, MD 21044 e-mail: info@fall-fest.com Phone: 410-465-6324

The Bermuda Triangle

de Sam N3QIE

I suppose just about everyone has read something about the Bermuda Triangle, also known as the Devil's Triangle, and also have some sort of option, fact or fancy on what they know or read.

But I don't suppose there are many who have gone though that area and experienced some strange goings-on. Well, here is an account of one such event. This is straight out of my personal work record on a day-by-day basis since 1952, my first day on the return to the Philadelphia Navy Yard.

I was working for the PERA CRU-DES group at the time. The term PERA is "Planning, Estimating Repairs and Alterations; CRU-DES is short for Cruiser-Destroyer class ships. The cruiser *Albany* (CG-10) had just finished minor overhaul the Navy Yard and an inspection was to be made for additional work at Mayport Station, Florida. I was assigned with three others to make the inspection and record our findings for the plan work to follow.

This was to be done aboard ship while underway to Mayport, with a brief stop at Norfolk, Virginia for some radar testing with aircraft targets. With that part complete, the test for refueling at sea, and personnel transfer ship-to-ship at sea was also done.

We left the Navy Yard on Saturday, June 22 1974 about 9:45am, and we were now three days at sea. Just south of Cape Hatters, on Tuesday the 25th, we ran into a tropical storm that seemed to follow southward. By the time we reached a point off Charleston, South

By dead reckoning (as the compasses were still out) we made a complete turn to the north. However, our radar warned us we were approaching coastal waters.

After another day and night we were surprised to hear all compass readings were back to normal.

It was Sunday morning June 30 about 10:15am. The helicopter hovered over the ship's stern and we were hoisted up and headed for Jacksonville. We had survived the triangle.

Some years later I learned of another event that came to me from a first-hand

source, A different ship at a different time, but again a familiar happening. The helicopter carrier *USS New Orleans* (LPH-11) left Guantanamo Bay Cuba on Tuesday May 15, 1979, destination Philadelphia Navy Yard, for extensive overhaul. After a brief exercise off Key West with patrol craft, they headed north off the Florida coast. It was May 19. South of Mayport Florida, the LPH-11 was suddenly surrounded by a thick fog, and all compass readings were erratic. Radio communications were in good order and functioning. For three days the ship was at a near standstill. When the fog suddenly lifted, the ship regained normal speed, but the compasses were still erratic. After several hours of near-normal sailing, the compass readings returned to normal, and the ship arrived at the Navy Yard on Wednesday, May 23rd.

This information came to me from a Yeoman, first class whom I knew at the Public Information Office in



Monthly Phil-Mont VE Exam Sessions

...should resume in September. Contact Dusty ND3Q for current information. See page 2 for details.

Carolina, the storm was gone, but we were engulfed in a dense fog and a rolling sea.

Word got around that all compass readings were erratic, even emergency steering reported compass failure. We, the inspection group, were notified by radio message from Jacksonville Naval Air Station that they were not able to send a helicopter out to the ship due to the intense fog. We were to be picked up at the ship and taken to the Naval Air Station for the trip home.

The ship was now down to minimal speed and it was evident that we were on judgment navigation. This contender for two more days with only radar and radio guidance and communications. We were near the estimated point off Miami when the sky cleared and a message informed the ship to backtrack to a point off Mayport as the area was safe for helicopter pick-up.

Building 6 at the Navy Yard. He was aboard the LPH-11 and recorded the event which he passed on to me. He requested at the time not to give out the story, or mention how I got it. He stated that the ship's force, the entire crew, was asked not to reveal the happenings. This came from the ship's captain by way of the executive officer.

That request was not unusual as the Navy frowns on publicizing any naval event of an unexplainable nature. However, like you, I only know what I have read and what I have seen.

Windows Tips from Ted

de Ted N3OWM

Five downloads I would rather not have on my system.

Spyware;

To offset production costs many developers bundle third-party applications inside their free programs. This lets them provide you with new program versions and updates without going bankrupt. The good news is you get access to free software. The bad news is it may come with spyware.

Spyware is a piece of software that attempts to "call home" or communicate with a remote server. Spyware is becoming synonymous mostly with marketing companies that track your surfing habits so they can customize and serve you ads specifically suited to your tastes. Some forms of spyware even

use your computer's Internet connection to deliver ads to other users on the Internet.

You should always do your homework when installing a free piece of software on your system. The best place to find out what you're loading on your system is the program's end user license agreement (EULA). When you install a bundled program on your system it should have its own EULA. The next time you're presented with a license agreement, don't proceed without reading it.

1-Gator.

Is a program that advertises itself as the ultimate tool for helping you fill out Web forms. It automatically senses when you've arrived at a Web form and it completes it with the click of a mouse. But, Gator is really nothing more than insidious spyware. The reason I call it insidious is that Gator can be part of any "freeware" program that you download. If you read (most don't) the user license hidden in plain sight you will find a line or two telling you that Gator will be loaded on your system. Gator collects WebPages your computer views and how much time you spend at those sites, your response to the ads it displays, the software on your computer, your first name, your country, your five-digit ZIP code, and your system settings. Along with all this data collection, it also periodically installs additional updates. Your system becomes part of the Gator Advertising Information Network or GAIN network. Also, Gator has tons of pop-up ads.

2-Bonzi Buddy

He's your interactive friend and

traveling companion on the Internet! He walks, talks, sings, browses and searches the Internet with you. That's according to the website...he's also very annoying. This is just a big pain in the rear quarters, the longer it resides on your system the greater the pain. This plugin also phones home with data about your web habits.

3-GoHip

GoHip should be called GoAway! This is basically a browser extension that's useless because, well, it just is. Do you really need a browser extension? No, you don't. The really annoying thing is that this puppy is a pain to get rid of. You have to go to the site just to uninstall it. I don't know if this is a spyware package, however you really don't need it.

4-Hotbar

This is the plugin that started me on the spyware quest. I noticed a lot of strange activity on our proxy connection. I was able to trace the activity to a site that is part of the hotbar domain. Hotbar is an Internet Explorer plug-in that lets you skin your browser title bar and do neat things with your outlook e-mail client. It also collects tons of information about your surfing habits, logging every webpage you visit and every search you perform, and then sending the results back to Hotbar. This app does not uninstall with grace, sometimes the uninstall will wipe out outlook or cause problems with Office apps. Use the uninstall tool offered by Hotbar for best results.

5-Xupiter

Xupiter is another IE toolbar add-on that contains links to the xupiter.com search engine. It runs at

Links:

http://www.gohip.com/remove_browser_enhancement.html
<http://hotbar.com/downloads/HBfullUnInst.exe>
<http://www.xupiter.com/uninstall.html>
<http://www.javasoftusa.com/software/adaware/>
<http://security.kolla.de/>

startup, delivers pop-up and pop-under ads, and periodically hijacks your browser homepage. Its adware also tries to phone home, attempting to log you on to the Net periodically. Run the Xupiter uninstall utility to get rid of it.

Something you *probably* shouldn't download

Andrew Hawn from TechTV Labs also warns us to stay clear of RealOne Player because it's more aggressive about taking over your system's media experience than other media players and it's difficult to remove. He says:

True, RealOne does a good job with streaming media compression and quality, but you have to disable just about everything in the initial player

setup. It also implies you need to upgrade to a pay version of the player to get the best content. If you like Real video or audio, download the player. If you just think you need every player installed on your system, think again.

Finally, if you uninstalled any of the programs listed in this roundup, run Ad-aware or Spybot — Search & Destroy to verify full removal.

I am running out of ideas for this column, Please send PC question to theoikat@bellatlantic.net.



IMPORTANT

UPCOMING DIRECTORY SUPPLEMENT

With the October Blurb you will receive the 2003 Directory Supplement.

It will contain new member information plus corrections and additions that have been received during the last six months.

If you have any changes that you would like included, I must **have them by September 15th**. In addition, the Supplement will feature the "electronic mailing

September Birthdays

- 01 Peggy Balch (XYL W3KG)
Sol Volen – N3UBY
- 03 Marian Fox – WA3YJR
- 05 George Walmsley – W3DO
- 07 Steve Walko – K3PHL
- 13 Marge Concordia (XYL WB3KAC)
- 15 Bob Freer – W3YLT
- 17 Vikye Swanson (XYL N3GLH)
- 20 Michael Taraborrelli – N3MT
- 21 Marion Lester (XYL W3FWI)
- 23 Russ Stafford – W3CH

list" of PMRC members who have sent me their packet and/or E-Mail addresses.

If you would like to be listed, or have a change, send your information to me at: wb3koj@comcat.com or Don Gordon 641 Kismet Road Philadelphia PA 19115

MEMBERSHIP STATS

At press time PMRC has:
107 FULL PAID MEMBERS
9 FAMILY MEMBERS
2 YOUTH MEMBERS
2 HONORARY MEMBERS
0 PENDING MEMBERS

Date	September 2003 with PMRC
Mon 01	Labor Day
Tue 02	
Wed 03	PMRC Board of Directors Meeting--WRDV
Thu 04	
Fri 05	
Sat 06	
Sun 07	NCS: 2m K3XS – 75m W2AJV
Mon 08	
Tue 09	
Wed 10	PMRC General Meeting – Masonic Home
Thu 11	
Fri 12	
Sat 13	
Sun 14	NCS: 2m WU3I – 75m WA3KIO
Mon 15	
Tue 16	
Wed 17	
Thu 18	
Fri 19	
Sat 20	
Sun 21	NCS: 2M KB3IV 75m KB3IV
Mon 22	
Tue 23	
Wed 24	
Thu 25	
Fri 26	
Sat 27	
Sun 28	NCS: 2m WB3KOJ – 75m W3STW
Mon 29	
Tue 30	

Summer's almost over!

The September PMRC meeting will include distribution of T-shirts and info packets to MS-150 volunteers

We're not certain of the schedule for the September VE exams, talk to Dusty ND3Q for the latest details

Don't miss the note from Don WB3KOJ about the October PMRC Directory Supplement...get any updated information to him pronto!

First Class Mail

The Phil-Mont Mobile Radio Club, Inc
641 Kismet Road Philadelphia PA 19115

The Blue